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**"MAKING FRIENDS BY SERVING"**

## **SERVING**

The word "serve" has a sordid history. We associate the word "serve" with something waitpeople do to food. Earlier generations pressed slaves serve them. To be "servile" is to project a failed character. Leaders do not serve; leaders are served. A wealthy man has "servants." A medieval middle-class person was a "serf."

Another view of serving also has a long pedigree. Confucius (550 BC) made of the "gentleman" a servant of his community. Lao Tzu (450 BC) said that the leader is the man who stands in the back, does nothing, and makes sure that by doing nothing, everything turns out just right. Jesus (27 AD) turned the world on its head when he opined, "Whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave." (Matthew 20:26-27) Mohammed (622 AD) aimed to destroy classes among peoples, and made of all Islam a brotherhood of equals. Charity became an Islamic pillar. The great persons (so says Brad) of the modern era have all given themselves to service and peaceful change unequivocally: Albert Schweitzer, Mother Theresa, Mohandas Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., Desmond Tutu (to name famous servants), and the unheralded host who make the world better, without trumpets or beating drums. Among these last are Rotarians.

The world can be changed with a fist or an open hand. Rotarians (because they question all wars, both great and global, as well as small and interpersonal) choose the open hand. Change wrought by fists is swift, fleeting, and frequently fatal. Fists insure backlash and hatred. Helping hands work small changes, slow changes. No one dies of being helped. Helping hands insure good will and reciprocation. Such changes endure, because they ennoble the human heart. Helping hands build social capital, which is an invisible tide of skill and good faith that intrinsically enriches our experience of meaning. In this sense, servants are spiritual billionaires. When they generate their "wealth," they enrich the deep of others' hearts.

Tim and Steve, in Rotary, we seek to serve in the company of friends. **Rotary is humanity seeking its best self. Together. In service.**

*Welcome to Rain City Rotary.*

**BRAD LANCASTER**  
Membership Chairperson